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NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY, INC.
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REGARDING RUBBER AGAIN **

We gave President Roosevelt's salvage drive for scrap rubber quite a bit of space in last week's BVC newsletter because we feared some of the broadcasting clan might under-estimate its importance to the national war effort. Radio, from reports reaching our ears, responded in gratifying fashion (even "magnificently", according to some official spokesmen), plugging the drive with machine-gun persistence. But overall public response, measured in the quantity of rubber thus far realized, would hardly take a pre-eminent place among the seven wonders of anybody's world.

The national salvage campaign was launched about half-past June. Here it is, a quarter to July, and the drive still has another week to run. Radio is being called upon to renew its efforts, reaching a real crescendo of persuasion over the weekend of June 27 and 28. More repetition, station breaks, the coaxing and wheedling of ordinary spot announcements just aren't enough. This project calls for a real whirlwind finish - a promotional drive utilizing promotional ignuinity so that, in the last days before June 30, every listener is so rubber-conscious he'll go around pulling the bumpers off his wife's vacuum cleaner and the tires from the baby's carriage.

Rubber is soulfully important to the winning of this war. America has a slowly dwindling stockpile of crude supplies on hand, and it must be made to last just as long as superhumanly possible. You've heard, again and again, how over 90 percent of our once-upon-a-time rubber sources are now under the Nipponese flag. Production of synthetic rubber, in the extravagant quantities we need, cannot be reached for perhaps another two years. Guayule and other rubber-bearing plants, by the very laws of agriculture, will not be an important source until 1946 or 1947.

Reclaimed rubber is therefore essential if we are to fulfill the vast program of war production sketched out ahead of us. Reclaimed rubber must be mixed with the crude supplies on hand so that trucks and tanks may roll, bombers may fly. There will be no surplus for the myriad little men and women of Main Street. They must walk for a good long while yet, but they have the ample consolation that they still are walking on free soil.

Probably one of the obstacles to wider success of the rubber drive has been a lack of public imagination as to what things contain rubber, and which don't. Some people nurse the mistaken notion that only old, dried-up junk rubber is expected of them. Others can't be bothered sacrificing some item they might just possibly want at some indeterminate time in the future. To help a little, you could have your announcers deviate from spicing off staple examples like tires, bathing caps and tennis shoes. Try things like inner tubes...crope rubber soles...boots and overshoes...rubber sheeting...pads and matting...suction cups...furniture foot and bumpers...rubber shower curtains...rubber belting...rubber medical supplies...rubber gloves...erasers...old rain-

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coats...rubber heels...jar rings...children's toys...old garden hose...worn typewriter rollers...rubber tubing...rubber stamps...rubber bath sponges and mats...rubber beach toys and cushions...football and basketball bladders ...and a lot of other items you can quickly think of if you'll just put your mind to it.

FROM THE OFFICE OF CENSORSHIP **

On the way for several weeks now has been a partial revision of the Code of Wartime Practices for American Broadcasters - that very sound document first issued by the Office of Censorship some five months back. The alterations, based on practical experience and some changing conditions, combine original provisions with supplemental suggestions and interpretations that have developed as the Censorship Office worked with broadcasters. The outcome, we think, is a fortified and very workable code.

The final draft is being reviewed for further suggestions on Monday and Tuesday (June 22 and 23) of this week by industry representatives including the entire Broadcasters Victory Council, headed by Chairman John Shepard, 3rd., and Executive Secretary O. L. Ted Taylor.

The general and broad approach to the problem of voluntary censorship, as taken by the revised code, remains the same. It's postulated on the sound ground that every American broadcaster should help prevent the dissemination of information that might aid our several enemies and injure our war endeavor. Today, even as five months back, broadcasters must recognize the dangers in news broadcasts and routine programming.

The best defense, of course, is to keep a close and unyielding watch over all programming every minute that your carrier is on the air. Only by rigid, constant surveillance can we avoid incidents that the whole industry may have cause to mourn for.

The new code will allow station managements to continue functioning as their own censors. The facilities of the Office of Censorship, however, are at their disposal around the clock to assist in consultation and advice when any doubt arises.

Copies of the revised code will go in the mail to all broadcasters during the latter part of this week.

ANOTHER NAME - AND STILL NO ROSE

Probably one of the most trenchant, razor-like weapons in the world is ridicule. Pomposity can't stand up under it; the scowling brow and the self-made deity shrink to pathetic proportions at its approach. That's why we applaud a suggestion from Ernest F. Bader, manager of KBON, Omaha, who sees unexploited possibilities in Herr Hitler's original family name - a collection of sticky syllables pronounced "Schickelgruber."

"Consider," Mr. Bader points out sagely, "the success of the Nazis in glorifying the name of 'Hitler'. They knew well enough that this maniac could never have gained world-wide notoriety under his true name. And they were mighty smooth in getting the rest of the world to help them promote the new name of 'Hitler'."

The idea we're coming to is not, of course, completely new. There has been a small coterie of stalwart commentators who never let the word Hitler occur on their broadcasts. The great fuhrer of the German people is always "Adolph Schickelgruber" - pronounced with proper derision and a slight buckling of the upper lip. Supposed, however, all broadcasters and every newspaper in America stopped referring to Hitler and change over instead to "Schickelgruber" in the same way we substituted "Istanbul" for "Constantinople" and "Eire" for "Ireland"?

WE GO BACK TO GASOLINE **

The BVC understands, with a certain amount of justifiable relief and satisfaction, that the recently-reported spot announcements for "Fearless Motor Fuel Formulas" have been withdrawn and will not again be proffered to radio stations. We are informed that the agency which attempted to place this business was not aware that the book being advertised (giving formulas for gasoline substitutes) is in apparent violation of rationing regulations, and contrary to the government's policy on rubber conservation.

The matter, so far as we know, ends here.

THEY MEAN WELL...BUT! **

From out far-west-way the BVC learns of an oil company that's trying to help the rubber salvage drive with more enthusiasm than accuracy. To a number of stations, it has sent a series of spot announcements implying that if the public turns in all its old hot water bottles and inner tubes right now, there's a definite chance now tires will become available because the rubber situation will be alleviated.

Beware of any such statements, or hints of such statements. It's absolutely not so. The scrap rubber drive is vital to America's war effort, helping us spread our supplies of crude rubber as far and as thin as possible. But not far or thin enough in 1942 and 1943 for the average citizen to expect new tires, recaps or retreads. Reclaimed rubber - as we said - must be mixed with crude. Even if the salvage appeal brings in its expected quota, we still have not any more rubber than we actually require for military purposes. The situation - we repeat - is today so acute that the Army and Navy have been forced to cut their own consumption by 25 percent.

Consequently, if you're cooing to the public over your air with such bedtimers as:- "Now there's a chance we can all have tires, if we collect enough rubber from our homes. Let's make that chance a certainty"...well, you're just misleading listeners, building up false hopes, tampering with the goodwill of your audience, and making a plain, ill-informed liar of yourself.

Take our word for it. The rubber salvage drive must be pushed full-tilt - but to help America win the war and not for the selfish purpose of putting the joyriders back on our highways.

GRAVE, AND GETTING GRAVER **

This business of broadcasting's diminishing manpower continues to be serious and receives sizeable brow-furrowing these days by the Broadcasters Victory Council. Obviously the drain on technicians and other skilled personnel may eventually force some of our smaller stations, offering perforce

smaller salaries, to push the "off" button for good. Such a development, as we see it, is inimical to the war effort and weakens a major liaison between our government and its people.

The remarks of FCC Chairman Fly on this topic, at his press conference last week, are good support for our contentions. Viewing this unrelenting drain with alarm, he is quoted as saying, "In back of the whole thing may be the assumption that the broadcasting industry is not vital to the war effort."

Naturally any such assumption should be royally torpedoed before it gets rooted in the wrong places. Chairman Fly expresses the Commission's attitude concisely - "We feel broadcasting is very essential in terms of mass communication, information, and in sustaining morale," adding that, "this can hardly be over-emphasized."

There is, he revealed, a definite move afoot to study the subject thoroughly from the standpoint of manpower so that station personnel will not be taken for non-military "war essential" duties. "In the evaluation of different activities," he said, "broadcasting should stand high on the list."

Apart from manpower, Selective Service is another matter. No effort has been made to secure a blanket industry deferment, but national Selective Service headquarters will be asked to urge that local boards give careful and close consideration to individual cases. As most broadcasters recall, Major General Lewis B. Hershey, draft head, has implied on several occasions that broadcasting may well be looked upon as vital to the war effort. Some draft boards share that opinion. Others have even gone so stupidly far as to declare, when classifying a radio technician, that "it is inconceivable how a radio station engaged in commercial broadcasting can in any way contribute to the war effort."

The BVC, incidentally, is formulating a plan that may shortly be placed before Selective Service officials. It provides for the retention - if worse meets worst - of a minimum personnel needed to run each of the nation's broadcast outlets. The plan will be flexible and base itself upon the individual programming set-up, also whether its transmitter and studios are at the same or different locations.

We suggest that a copy of Chairman Fly's remarks might be sent to your personnel - at least to technicians.

COMMUNIQUE FROM CALIFORNIA **

Speaking (as we were) about the revised Code of Wartime Practices for American Broadcasters, it seems like poetic justice with a backspin on it to trot forth a letter by S. W. Fuller, manager of KGB in San Diego, California. We get excruciating glee from the way Mr. Fuller's letter is written, but what he says is a dour indictment of certain unnamed broadcasters, and therefore causes us excruciating pain as well.

We give you his letter, like a 48-gun salute from the Golden West. Take it well to heart, particularly if it makes your conscience quiver in the slightest.

"Somebody has a trip to the woodshed coming to him. It's nice to read about the morale-building job that radio is doing, but in the past few weeks

we've been hearing things out here in California that make our hackles rise. California, as you may have heard, is not populated entirely by Native Sons. Quite a mess of folks have come here from other States. More than a few have relatives and families in other parts of the country, and the chorus of concern that drifts Westward from worried parents whose children are out here in the Golden State is more than a breeze. It's a howling hurricane.

"The commotion began before Dutch Harbor. Since then the rumpus has been awful. We have heard countless incidents of frantic exchanges of telegrams and long distance calls, but we will refer only to two which we have verified. One report, received by air mail from North Central Iowa and another, first by long distance from Central Georgia and now personally confirmed by a Mother who has just arrived in panic to be near her daughter and grandchildren caught in the toils of War in this hazardous area reveal the part that Radio has played in creating a wholly unjustified and utterly cruel hysteria.

"Four news reports daily received by radio in a small Iowa town explained the plight of California, the imminent approach of the enemy, the frantic preparations for bombing, the wholesale attempts of the citizens to escape to safer areas. Naturally, the Iowa parents had a fit. It was news. It came to them by radio. It must be true.

"In Georgia the thing was spiced up with a lot of miserable melodramatics. Programs of music and entertainment were interrupted with panicky "News 11:30." "Flashes" explaining that the California barrage balloons were in the air, that gas masks were being hurriedly issued to police and defense personnel, that all hell was poppin' and the Nips were all but on the beaches. Whereupon Georgia relatives of imperiled Californians jammed the wires in search of confirmation or comfort and this one Georgian to whom we have referred, failing to persuade her daughter to pack up the children and come back to the South, proceeded forthwith to set out for the gas-mask barrage-balloon bomb-scare front. With her heart in her mouth she was determined to be near her children and now that she's here she's of a mind to sue the radio industry as a whole.

"What the Sam Hill goes on in midwest and eastern studios? Is there such a shortage of legitimate news that jittery crackpots have to manufacture it and serve it up hysterically in the form of "Bulletins" jammed into broken program time? What kind of morale-busting monkeyshines are these? Here in the West we serve the news audience with carefully-verified copy; the bad news with the good - but we have yet to magnify any East Coast crisis just for the sake of comforting our West Coasters with the news that other folks are in peril, too.

"It's quite true that the Pacific States are sitting here staring Japan in the eye, but what of it? Hell's afire! We've been doing just that for six months. In that six months we've not been sitting around sucking our knuckles. Every day we live finds us with better defenses. If we're going to be hit we're going to be hit. So what? We've got our dukes up. And when the blow falls - if it ever does - will be time enough for newscasters to go crazy. Certainly that hour has not yet struck. Radio plays the enemy's game whenever it contributes to panic in any part of the country.

"We are naming no specific stations in this blast of protest. Wherever the shoe fits, let it fit."

Thus endeth the monsoon. You can come out of your bomb collars now. But the BVC roundly seconds everything Mr. Fuller says to the whole-hog extent that we believe any broadcaster who pretzel-izes the news in the manner described should instantly and irrevocably lose his liconse. And, brother, the BVC will be the first to recommend it!

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